Charter School Performance Review Handbook

Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Transformation

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FOR COMMENT AND INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

PREFACE

[PLACEHOLDER]

1. IS THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

OVERVIEW

The Academic Performance Metrics are designed to accurately identify academic success and failure of charter schools using the most generalizable and accurate data available annually. Broadly, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will use this data to answer the question, "Is the school's educational program an academic success?" Using these targets will allow RIDE to simultaneously set high expectations for Rhode Island's charters and provide multiple ways to examine evidence of a school's academic performance.

METHOD

The common academic performance measures have been developed by RIDE to assess charter schools' success educating their students. They serve as a supplement to performance targets and requirements derived from state and federal law that apply to all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in Rhode Island. The common measures described in this chapter are required in each school's accountability plan and along with state and federal performance requirements will be weighted most heavily in determining whether a school is an academic success.

An ideal evaluation of the academic success of charter schools would accurately predict the unobserved counterfactual—how well students would have done if they had attended their neighborhood traditional public school—and compare this to their actual performance while attending a charter. These studies utilized a myriad of experimental and quasi-experimental techniques to establish an *experimental control group.* Integrating the "gold standard" of program evaluation in the methodology of a long-term accountability framework requires time, money, and data that are unavailable and/or unsustainable.

Absent the ability to create an *experimental control group*, RIDE must instead produce the most accurate *comparison groups* against which charter performance will be judged. RIDE has developed a three-prongapproach to assessing school-level academic performance on NECAP—absolute performance levels, performance relative to other schools and districts, and student-level growth (in elementary and middle schools only). Each of these measures establishes a unique comparison group (summarized in Table 1), and taken together, these comparisons will present a comprehensive assessment of academic performance in charters.

Each of the five measures in Table 1corresponds to a sub-question in the Performance Framework under the general question, "Is the school's educational program an academic success?". In addition to these measures, all charter schools will be required to meet their federally and state mandated assurances for access and quality of academic services for all students. This includes provisions in Title 1 and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which target students in poverty, students with limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities, respectively. Each charter high school will also have to develop at least two post-secondary readiness and success metrics in conjunction with RIDE. These metrics will fall under the category of, "School-specific Educational Goals". All charters will have the option to develop additional school-specific educational goals with RIDE which they will be held accountable for when determining the success of their school.

Table 2 provides an overview of the Common Academic Performance Metrics that will be implemented to assess success on Question 1 of the Performance Framework.

Table 1: Common Metrics and Their Comparison Groups

Metric	Comparison Group
Absolute Proficiency Level	Past performance at existing charter and pre-established benchmarks in RIDE's strategic plan
Sending-District Comparison	Performance in districts which send students to the charter
Similar Schools Comparison	Estimated performance based on demographics in all schools in Rhode Island
Student-Level Growth	Students with the same previous academic performance
ELL Growth on ACCESS	Nationwide sample of students, based on prior achievement and age.

Table 2: Overview of Academic Performance Metrics

Elementary and Middle Schools	High School
All existing state and federal requirements pertaining to access and quality of educational services for all students	All existing state and federal requirements pertaining to access and quality of educational services for all students
Absolute Proficiency Level	Absolute Proficiency Level
Sending-District Comparison	Sending-District Comparison
Similar Schools Comparison	Similar Schools Comparison
Student-Level Growth	
Typical growth for students classified as English Language Learners on the ACCESS assessment.	Typical growth for students classified as English Language Learners on the ACCESS assessment.
Mission-specific metrics	Mission-specific metrics
	At least two post-secondary readiness and success mission-specific metrics

Performance on these measures will be rated individually, but no information will be disregarded. The final assessment of a school's academic performance during the charter term will be based on the preponderance of evidence generated by these multiple measures.

1.1A AND 1.1B: IS THE SCHOOL ON TRACK TO MAKE MEASURABLE GAINS IN NECAP ABSOLUTE PROFICIENCY LEVEL BY THE END OF THE CHARTER TERM?IS THE SCHOOL ON TRACK FOR OR HAS THE SCHOOL MET THE 2012 STRATEGIC PLAN ABSOLUTE PROFICIENCY LEVEL NECAP TARGETS?

Evaluation Method: Based on the number of students taking the NECAP and the NECAP proficiency levels at each grade level, a minimum target will be independently calculated for each of the last three years that represent the upper 95% confidence limit.The average of these three targets becomes the absolute target if it exceeds the 2012 strategic plan targets.Otherwise, the strategic plan target will be used as the minimum proficiency level.

Because new schools do not have enough data to establish baseline proficiency-levels to set future targets, they will be expected to meet the strategic plan target as their minimum proficiency level.

Rating:
- **Meets Expectations:**The school's proficiency level meets the absolute target.
- **Almost Meets Expectations:**The absolute target is within one standard deviation above the school's proficiency level.
- **Does Not Meet Expectations:**The absolute target is greater than one standard deviation above the school's proficiency level.

Example Calculation

$$Minimum\ target = z^* * \sqrt{\frac{pq}{N}} + p$$

where z* is the z-value which corresponds to the 97.5% cumulative percentage in the z-distribution, representing the 95% confidence interval in standardized testing, N is the number of students, p is the percent proficient, and q is (1-p).

Excellent Charter has 30 8th grade students and50% of their students are proficient on the 8th grade NECAP math exam:

$$Minimum target = 1.96 * \sqrt{\frac{(50)(50)}{30}} + 50 = 67.9\%$$

This calculation is carried out for the last three years and the resulting targets are averaged. For this example, we assume that the three individually calculated targets average to 69%. Since 68% is the strategic plan target for 8th grade math in 2012, this school's absolute target is 69%. If this school had 45 students, the minimum target would have been 64.6%. Since 64.6% is less than the Strategic Plan's target of 68%, that school's target would be raised to 68%.

Excellent Charter's proficiency level in the renewal year is 66%, so they are rated as "**Almost Meets Expectations**".

1.2: IS THE SCHOOL OUTPERFORMING ITS STUDENTS' SENDING DISTRICTS AS MEASURED BY NECAP?

Evaluation Method: The composition of each charter school's student body will be used to create a weighted-average of the sending district's proficiency levels.

Rating:
- **Meets Expectations:** The school's proficiency level meets the sending-district target.
- **Almost Meets Expectations:** The sending-district target is within one standard deviation above the school's proficiency level.
- **Does Not Meet Expectations:** The sending-district target is greater than one standard deviation above the school's proficiency level.

> *Example Calculation*
>
> Excellent Charter draws 20% of its students from Cranston, 30% of its students from Providence, and 50% of its students from Pawtucket. The Sending District Target for Excellent Charter for 8th grade mathematics is:
>
> $$(20\% * \%Prof\,Cranston) + (30\% * \%Prof\,Providence) + (50\% * \%Prof\,Pawtucket)$$
> $$= (20\%)(78\%) + (30\%)(45\%) + (50\%)(54\%)$$
> $$= 56\%\,Sending\,District\,Target$$
>
> Excellent Charter's proficiency level is 66%, so they are rated as "**Meets or Exceeds Expectations**".

1.3: IS THE SCHOOL OUTPERFORMING DEMOGRAPHICALLY SIMILAR SCHOOLS AS MEASURED BY NECAP?

Evaluation Method: A bivariate linear regression model will be used to estimate schools' proficiency level based on the percentage of traditionally underserved students. (Note: Schools with fewer than 30 students are excluded from this model to ensure accuracy.)

Rating:
- **Above Typical Performance:** Proficiency is above the regression estimate, accounting for the standard error of both the regression estimate and proficiency level.
- **Typical Performance:** Proficiency is within the error of the regression estimate.
- **Below Typical Performance:** Proficiency is below the regression estimate, accounting for the standard error of both the regression estimate and proficiency level.

> *Example School*
>
> Forty percent of Excellent Charter's students are traditionally underserved students. At this concentration, the regression estimates that 61.2% ±2.9% of middle school students will be proficient in math. Excellent Charter's proficiency level is 64% in 6th grade, 63% in 7th grade, and 66% in 8th grade. Their school-wide proficiency is 64.3%± 5.1%.
>
> The lower limit of Excellent Charter's proficiency level is within the error of the upper limit of the regression target, so they are rated as "**Typical Performance**".
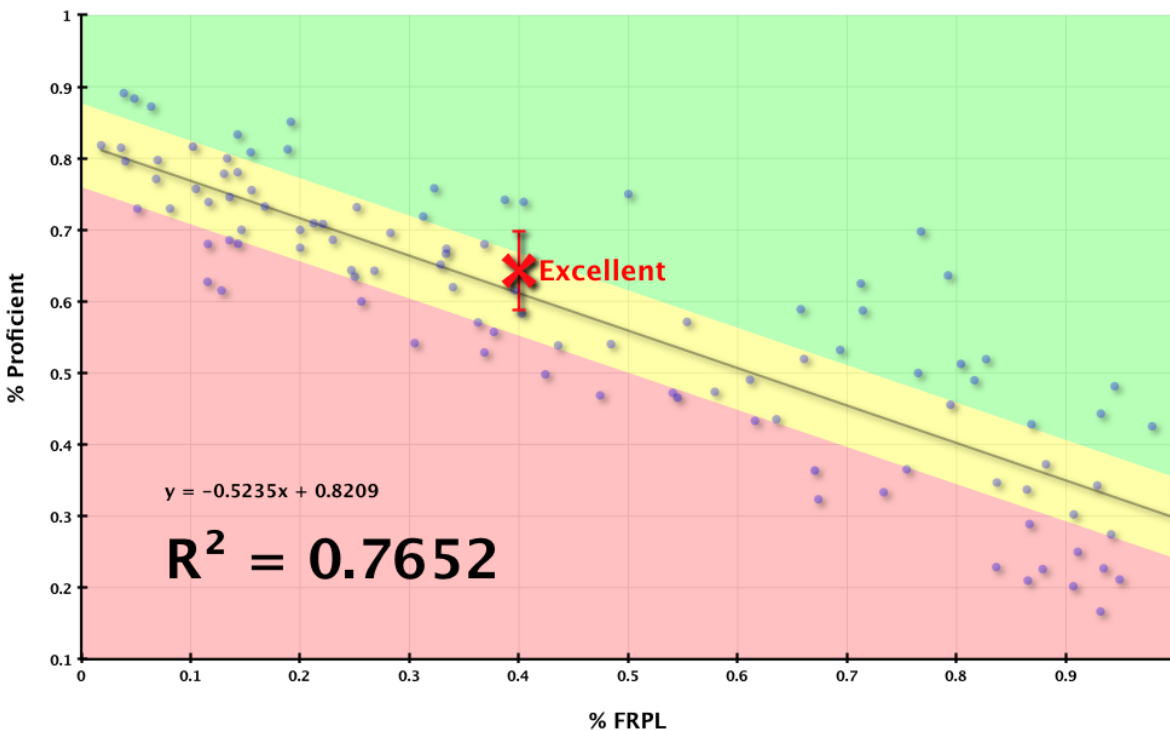
Middle School Math

$y = -0.5235x + 0.8209$

$$R^2 = 0.7652$$

Evaluation Method: Each school will be assigned a growth percentile by RIDE. RIDE calculates the growth percentile for all students in Rhode Island with similar baseline achievementand uses the median growth percentile in a school to assign a school-level growth percentile.

Rating:
- **Above Typical Performance:** Median growth is greater than or equal to the 55th percentile of growth for all students with similar baseline achievement.
- **Typical Performance:**Median growth is between the 45th and 55th percentile of growth for all students with similar baseline achievement.
- **Below Typical Performance:**Median growth is less than or equal to the 45th percentile of growth for all studentswith similar baseline achievement or the proficiency level is below 10%.

Example School

Excellent Charter's median student growth is in the 61[st]percentile of the students in the state. Excellent would be rated "**Above Typical Performance.**"

Growth Model Map
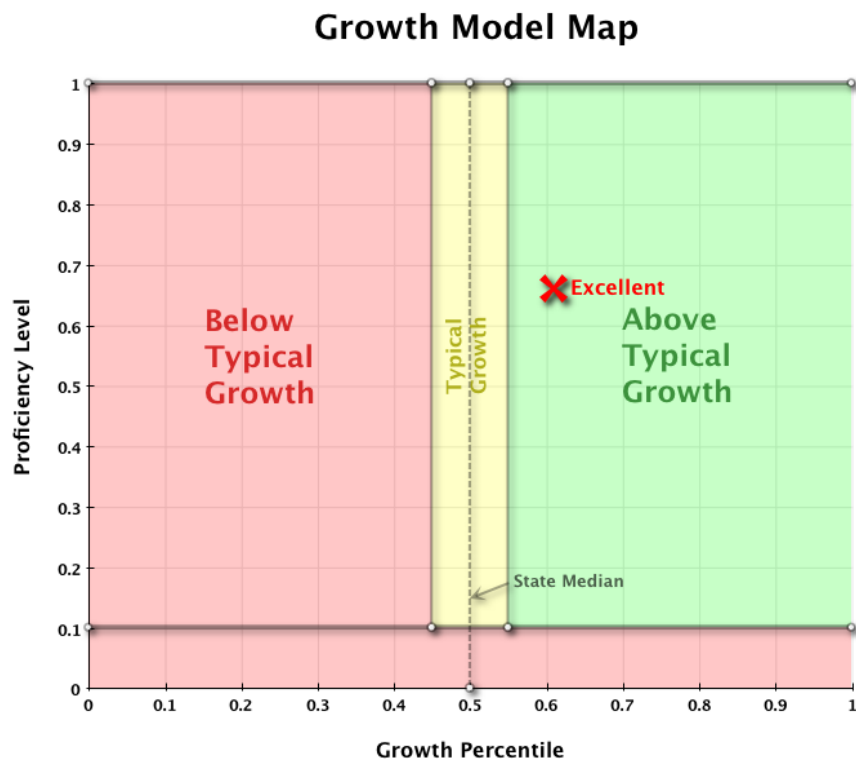
1.5: ARE STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY MAKING TYPICAL GROWTH IN ENGLISH FLUENCY AS MEASURED BY ACCESS?

Evaluation Method: The World-class Instructional Design (WIDA) Consortium, which develops Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS), has established typical growth expectations that control for a student's age and initial English proficiency through statistical analysis of 238,476 test takers nationwide. A summary of their findings can be found on the RIDE webpage at: http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/ell/content/WIDA-focus-on-growth.pdf. RIDE will calculate and report the number of individual students whose scaled score gains on ACCESS falls within (or above) the typical range as well as the number of ELLs participating in ACCESS.

Example School

Excellent Charter has 30 students who are classified as having limited English proficiency. All of these students participate in the ACCESS test. For each individual, his or her growth on ACCESS will be compared to the appropriate growth range as calculated by WIDA. At Excellent, 25 students have made growth within or above the identified range. RIDE would report 25/30 for Excellent in this year.

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1.6: IS THE SCHOOL MEETING ITS SCHOOL-SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL GOALS?

All charter schools will have the option to develop metrics to assess school-specific educational goals in cooperation with the Transformation Office at RIDE. These measures must be reliable indicators of student success available annually for analysis by RIDE. School-specific performance metrics must: allow for valid comparisons beyond the submitting school, e.g. state-level performance, national performance; or have performance requirements moderated to direct outcomes, e.g. scoring above a certain level results in entering college-level math courses instead of remediation.

1.6.1: IS THE SCHOOL PREPARING STUDENTS FOR POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS BY ENSURING COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS?

In recognition of the myriad ways students, families, and schools might define post-secondary success, RIDE is requiring that each charter high school will be required to have two school-specific metrics focused on college and career readiness. Several examples *might* include:

- Acceptance rates at competitive colleges and universities
- College enrollment 16-months from graduation at a college-prep high school.
- Passing rates on industry exams that result in certifications for career and technical education programs.

All post-secondary success metrics will be developed with the Transformation Office at RIDE and will be held to the same standards as all other school-specific educational goals.

1.7: NON-TESTED GRADES (K,1,8,9,11,12)

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1.8: IS THE SCHOOL MEETING FEDERAL AND STATE-REQUIRED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TARGETS?

As Rhode Island public schools, charter schools are still required to meet all federal and state academic performance targets. Detailed information on those targets are available at the following websites:

i. Adequate Yearly Progress and Title III AMAOs:
http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/accountability.aspx

ii. IDEA SPP Indicators:
http://www.ride.ri.gov/Special_Populations/State_federal_regulations/Default.aspx

iii. Basic Education Program:
http://www.ride.ri.gov/commissioner/edpolicy/bep.aspx

2. IS THE SCHOOL PROVIDING THE APPROPRIATE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS?

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2.1: ARE ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS AT THE SCHOOL RIGOROUS AND IS INSTRUCTION INCLUSIVE OF ALL LEARNERS?

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2.2: DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE A HIGH QUALITY CURRICULUM AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS FOR EACH GRADE?

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2.3: DOES THE SCHOOL EFFECTIVELY USE LEARNING STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS TO INFORM AND IMPROVE INSTRUCTION?

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2.4: HAS THE SCHOOL DEVELOPED ADEQUATE HUMAN RESOURCE SYSTEMS AND DEPLOYED ITS STAFF EFFECTIVELY?

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2.5: FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS, DOES THE SCHOOL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT GUIDANCE ON AND SUPPORT PREPARATION FOR POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS?

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2.6: IS THE SCHOOL CLIMATE CONDUCIVE TO STUDENT AND STAFF SUCCESS?

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2.7: IS ONGOING COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS AND PARENTS CLEAR AND HELPFUL?

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3. IS THE SCHOOL A VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

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3.1: IS THE SCHOOL IN SOUND FISCAL HEALTH?

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3.2: ARE THE SCHOOLS' STUDENT ENROLLMENT, ATTENDANCE, TRUANCY, AND RETENTION RATES STRONG?

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3.4: IS THERE A HIGH LEVEL OF PARENT AND STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH THE SCHOOL?

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3.5: IS THE SCHOOL MEETING ITS REPORTING AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS?

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3.6: IS THE SCHOOL RETAINING AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF ITS LOWEST-PERFORMING STUDENTS?

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3.7: IS THE SCHOOL'S BOARD ACTIVE AND COMPETENT IN ITS OVERSIGHT?

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3.8: HAS THE SCHOOL ESTABLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED A FAIR AND APPROPRIATE PUPIL ENROLLMENT PROCESS?

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3.9: IS THE SCHOOL FULFILLING ITS LEGAL OBLIGATIONS RELATED TO ACCESS AND SERVICES TO ESL STUDENTS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?

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3.10: IS THE SCHOOL MEETING ITS SCHOOL-SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GOALS?

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